

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): An exposure apparatus for projecting and exposing a circuit pattern formed on a reticle to an object to be exposed using a projection optical system while relatively scanning the reticle and the object to be exposed, comprising:

detecting means for measuring a position of the object to be exposed at a plurality of first measurement positions that meet a predetermined relative positional relationship in an exposure region of the object to be exposed to which the pattern is exposed and for measuring a position of the object to be exposed at a plurality of second measurement positions that meet the predetermined relative positional relationship in regions outside the exposure region; and

control means for controlling at least one of a position, a height, and a tilt of the object to be exposed based on information on the position of the object to be exposed which is measured by the detecting means,

wherein the plurality of first measurement positions are not arranged in a straight line, and the first measurement positions include three or more measurement positions.

Claims 2-3 (Canceled)

Claim 4 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the three measurement positions among the plurality of first measurement positions form a triangle.

Claim 5 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of second measurement positions are not arranged in a straight line.

Claim 6 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the second measurement positions include the three or more measurement positions.

Claim 7 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the three measurement positions among the plurality of second measurement positions form a triangle.

Claim 8 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 1, wherein the object to be exposed is scanned and exposed in the exposure region having a slit shape.

Claim 9 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 8, wherein the second measurement position is shifted relative to the exposure region having the slit shape in the scanning direction.

Claim 10 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 9, wherein:  
the detecting means measures a position of the object to be exposed at a plurality of third measurement positions that meet the predetermined relative positional relationship in the regions outside the exposure region; and

the direction in which the second measurement position is shifted relative to the exposure region having the slit shape is opposite to a direction in which the third measurement position is shifted to the exposure region having the slit shape.

Claim 11 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 1, further comprising a projection optical system for projecting the pattern to the object to be exposed, wherein the detecting means detects a position of the object to be exposed in a direction parallel to an optical axis of the projection optical system at the first measurement position and the second measurement position.

Claim 12 (Currently Amended): An exposure apparatus for projecting and exposing a circuit pattern formed on a reticle to an object to be exposed using a projection optical system while relatively scanning the reticle and the object to be exposed, comprising:

detecting means for measuring a plurality of positions of regions outside a region of the object to be exposed to which the pattern is exposed and measuring the same positions as the plurality of positions of the region of the object to be exposed to which the pattern is exposed; and

control means for controlling at least one of a height and a tilt of the object to be exposed to align the position of the object to be exposed with an optimum exposure position of the pattern based on information on the position of the object to be exposed which is measured by the detecting means,

wherein the plurality of first measurement positions are not arranged in a straight line, and the first measurement positions include three or more measurement positions.

Claim 13 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the detecting means measures the plurality of positions to form a plane on the object to be exposed.

Claim 14 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the detecting means measures at least three positions of the regions outside the region of the object to be exposed to which the pattern is exposed and the region to which the pattern is exposed.

Claim 15 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the detecting means measures five positions of the regions outside the region of the object to be exposed to which the pattern is exposed and the region to which the pattern is exposed.

Claim 16 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the detecting means performs measurement in a scanning direction of the object to be exposed to measure the plurality of positions arranged at different intervals in a non-scanning direction.

Claim 17 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 12, wherein the detecting means performs measurement on a plurality of positions of the regions outside the region of the object to be exposed to which the pattern is exposed and the region to which the pattern is exposed, by using a slit-shaped beam.

Claim 18 (Original): An exposure apparatus according to claim 17, wherein the slit-shaped beam aligns a pitch direction thereof to a substantially center position among the plurality of positions.

Claim 19 (Original): An exposure apparatus for projecting and exposing a circuit pattern formed on a reticle to an object to be exposed using a projection optical system while relatively scanning the reticle and the object to be exposed, comprising:

a focus detection system for, in at least one of a preceding region and a succeeding region of an exposure region of the object to be exposed, substantially simultaneously illuminating a plurality of positions which are arranged in a direction perpendicular to a scanning direction on the object to be exposed with light oblique with respect to the object to be exposed, and detecting the light from the object to be exposed with a sensor to determine the plurality of positions of the object to be exposed in an optical axis direction of the projection optical system; and

control means for controlling at least one of the position of the object to be exposed in the optical axis direction and a tilt thereof based on information on the plurality of positions of the object to be exposed in the optical axis direction, which are determined by the focus detection system,

wherein the plurality of positions are arranged to form a plane on the object to be exposed and the plurality of positions of the exposure region match the plurality of positions of at least one of the preceding region and the succeeding region of the exposure region of the object to be exposed.

Claim 20 (Currently Amended): An exposure method of projecting and exposing a circuit pattern formed on a reticle to an object to be exposed using a projection optical system while relatively scanning the reticle and the object to be exposed, comprising the steps of:

measuring a plurality of positions in a region outside a region of the object to be exposed to which the pattern is exposed;

driving the object to be exposed and adjusting at least one of a height and a tilt thereof to align a position of the object to be exposed with an optimum exposure position for the pattern based on information on the positions obtained in the measuring step;

measuring the same positions as the plurality of positions, in the region of the object to be exposed to which the pattern is exposed and confirming whether or not the object to be exposed is in the optimum exposure position;

calculating a difference between the optimum exposure position and the position of the object to be exposed in a case where the confirming step reveals that the object to be exposed is not in the optimum exposure position; and

driving the object to be exposed while adding the difference calculated in the calculating step to at least one of the height and the tilt of the object to be exposed in the driving step,

wherein the plurality of first measurement positions are not arranged in a straight line, and the first measurement positions include three or more measurement positions.

Claim 21 (Original): A device manufacturing method comprising the steps of:

performing projection and exposure on an object to be exposed using the exposure apparatus according to claim 1; and

performing a predetermined process on the object to be processes after the projection and exposure.

Claim 22 (Original): A device manufacturing method comprising the steps of:

performing projection and exposure on an object to be exposed using the exposure apparatus according to claim 12; and

performing a predetermined process on the object to be processes after the projection and exposure.

Claim 23 (Original): A device manufacturing method comprising the steps of:

performing projection and exposure on an object to be exposed using the exposure apparatus according to claim 19; and

performing a predetermined process on the object to be processes after the projection and exposure.